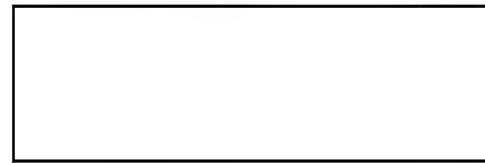


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27 March 1973



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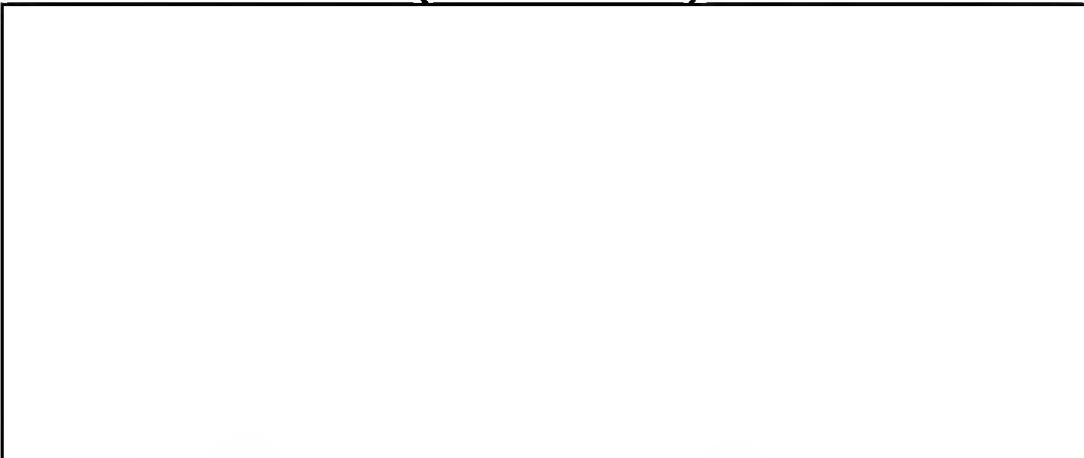
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# *Central Intelligence Bulletin*

## *CONTENTS*

EGYPT: President assumes premiership in an attempt  
to undercut critics. (Page 1)

25X1



USSR-PAKISTAN: Re-establishing economic ties  
(Page 7)

25X1

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EGYPT: President Sadat's assumption of the premiership yesterday appears to be another effort to undercut critics of his regime.

Prime Minister Sidqi has been the target of continuing criticism in Egypt and Sadat may hope that his removal will aid in reducing domestic unhappiness. By taking over that position, apparently for a limited period, Sadat may be attempting to prove that he can provide the forceful leadership many Egyptians have found wanting in his regime. The hazards of the Egyptian premiership are such that the job might be unattractive to many people; this could be another reason for Sadat's taking on the task himself.

His assumption of that position, however, will mean that Sadat is now more directly exposed to the type of criticism that was previously deflected to a degree by Sidqi. A realization of this was reflected in the President's speech yesterday, when he promised that a joint conference of legislature and party members would meet periodically to approve Egyptian policies, thereby spreading the responsibility for decision-making to others.

More cabinet changes accompanying the current shakeup in Cairo are expected to be formally announced today. A preliminary report on the new cabinet lineup broadcast by Cairo Radio yesterday, indicates that many members of the former government will retain their positions, including those holding the most important posts.

The lengthy speech yesterday also suggests that the new governmental structure will not mean major Egyptian policy changes. Considerable criticism was directed at the US. Sadat conceded, however, that in recent talks with presidential adviser Hafiz Ismail, President Nixon took a positive position, at least on the surface, regarding some settlement issues. The current phase was described as one of "all-out confrontation," but diplomatic ]

C activity would continue. The President generally adhered to well-known positions regarding settlement terms acceptable to Egypt.

Egyptian domestic problems were discussed, and Sadat again attempted to use the theme of the "coming battle" to urge greater discipline and sacrifice. He warned that the activities of dissenters would not be tolerated and portrayed student protesters as only a small minority of malcontents. [redacted]

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27 Mar 73

*Central Intelligence Bulletin*

2

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Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt

USSR-PAKISTAN: Moscow is re-establishing economic relations with Pakistan, dormant since the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war. A Soviet mission probably will go to Islamabad some time during the next several weeks to conclude a trade agreement with Pakistan

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[redacted] Earlier this month, Moscow relieved Islamabad of responsibility for unpaid debts incurred by Pakistan on behalf of its former east wing. Prior to the 1971 hostilities, Soviet-Pakistani trade amounted to \$70 million annually and Soviet aid deliveries averaged almost \$10 million a year. The agreement is a manifestation of increased Soviet efforts to improve relations with Pakistan following the low point reached during the Indo-Pakistani war.

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27 Mar 73

*Central Intelligence Bulletin*

7

25X1

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